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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [EUN](#) [TU](#) [NL](#)
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/EU: DUTCH VIEWS ON TURKEY, ENERGY
SECURITY, AND THE "NEIGHBORHOOD"

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES CHAT BLAKEMAN,
REASONS 1.5(B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: On December 13, EUR DAS Matthew Bryza discussed Turkey, Energy Security, and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in meetings with Marnix Krop (Director General for European Cooperation, MFA), Pieter de Gooijer (Deputy Director General for Political Affairs, MFA) and Kees van Rij (Director, Office of European Integration). Dutch interlocutors expressed appreciation for the low-key but influential role played by the U.S. in the lead-up to starting accession talk with Turkey, and agreed that the EU and U.S. should work together to keep the process on track. Securing long-term and diversified energy supplies for Europe is a high-priority issue for the Dutch, and the MFA hopes to have high-level USG participation at a seminar on the subject in The Hague next February. The Dutch and U.S. share similar goals in the regions covered by the "European Neighborhood Policy," including encouraging Russia to play a more productive role in building stable societies. END SUMMARY.

TURKEY: HELP KEEP TURKEY ON TRACK

12. (C) During his meeting with Marnix Krop (Director General for European Cooperation), Bryza thanked the Dutch for their efforts to help the EU and Turkey reach agreement on beginning EU accession talks on December 17, 2004 (during the Dutch Presidency) and on October 3, 2005. While the U.S. was "thrilled" with the outcome of the discussions, Bryza added, it was not seeking to pressure the EU into accepting Turkey as a member prematurely. Turkey had to undergo some major internal changes before joining the EU, and the U.S. and the EU should work together to help this process along. Ultimately, Bryza stressed, the question of actual EU membership was less important to the U.S. than "anchoring" Turkey in Europe politically and socially by virtue of Turkey advancing its modernizing reforms. Turkey could eventually decide to drop its bid for EU membership, but it was important not to make Turkey feel that it was being excluded unfairly. In addition to the geopolitical arguments for keeping Turkey in the Western Camp, Bryza added, Turkish traditions of secular democracy and tolerant Islamic faith could provide useful examples (but not models) both for the Middle East and for Muslim communities inside Europe.

13. (C) Krop agreed that U.S.-EU collaboration in the lead-up to October 3 had been fruitful, noting that much of the heavy-lifting had taken place during the 2004 Dutch EU presidency. He acknowledged that worries about heavy-handed U.S. pressure had proven groundless, largely because of excellent behind-the-scenes communication and coordination. That said, Krop stressed that European -- including Dutch -- "sensitivities" about Turkey must be taken into account. He noted with satisfaction that Dutch opinion polls taken after

October 3rd indicated that a majority now favored Turkish accession to the EU, but with significant reservations. European concerns about human rights, the role of the military in political life, and Islam could not be wished away; Turkey needed to change significantly before it truly be integrated into Europe.

¶4. (C) Bryza stressed that the U.S. would continue to work with Turkey to keep the reform process on track. At the same time, the EU could help make certain necessary steps "more palatable" for Turkey by providing an appropriate political or administrative context. For example, Bryza argued that the EU might be able to "soften the blow" of Turkey opening its ports to Cypriot ships by providing a structure within which Turkey and Turkish Cypriot ports might open up incrementally and simultaneously. Krop took this idea on board, but noted that the EU had long maintained that the UN was the appropriate body for dealing with the Cyprus issue. Bryza agreed, suggesting that perhaps the UN could be in charge of security of Cypriot ports, while the EU might issue documentation, as it currently does along Cyprus' "Green Line." In hindsight, Krop added, bringing Cyprus into the EU before a settlement might have been a mistake -- but it also had paved the way for the EU to begin accession talks with Turkey.

¶5. (C) Kees van Rij (Director, Office of European Integration) subsequently also thanked the U.S. for its "quiet cooperation" on Turkey. He observed that Cyprus posed some difficult problems issues for Turkey and the EU, and agreed that the U.S. and EU should continue to coordinate closely on ways to help all sides take necessary but difficult next steps.

ENERGY SECURITY: HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION CRITICAL

¶6. (C) All three Dutch MFA interlocutors said the Dutch are focused increasingly on the issue of securing long-term and diversified energy supplies for Europe. Referring to the latest Russian-German pipeline project, Marnix Krop observed that the routes of individual pipelines were less important than the question of whether or not they were connected to the European grid. Having a large number of inter-connected pipelines was the best guarantor of long-term energy security. Referring to Central Asia and the Caucasus, van Rij noted that Europe's efforts to secure energy supplies had obvious implications for European relations with Russia and other states in the "neighborhood." Both Krop and van Rij stressed the importance of energy security as a transatlantic, rather than European, issue. Bryza made clear that the U.S. was thinking along similar lines and was eager to engage. But he also stressed the importance of truly diversified energy sources, which meant a multiplicity of suppliers and transit companies, rather than multiple pipelines to a single supplier.

¶7. (C) Pieter de Gooijer (Deputy Director General for Political Affairs) told Bryza that the Dutch were moving ahead with planning for a energy security seminar to be held in The Hague on February 6-8 of 2006. Dutch Foreign Minister Bot had discussed this proposed seminar with and extended an invitation to Deputy Secretary Zoellick during Bot's recent trip to the U.S., he added. In light of the upcoming holidays and need to secure high-level participation, de Gooijer pressed Bryza for an early U.S. commitment to participate at a very senior level.

¶8. (C) According to de Gooijer, the proposed seminar would bring together both government officials and top private sector executives from the North Atlantic community for a closed, off-the-record discussion of energy security issues from a broad strategic point of view. De Gooijer proposed that the seminar be co-sponsored by the Dutch MFA, the U.S. Department of State, the Nixon Center, and the Atlantic Commission of the Netherlands. Asked about possible U.S. participants, de Gooijer stated that Deputy Secretary

Zoellick would be ideal in light of his experience in senior-level positions dating back to the Reagan administration. As an aside, de Gooijer noted that a U.S. commitment to high-level participation would be helpful in keeping Foreign Minister Bot actively involved in the project. Bryza, noting his own involvement and personal interest in energy security, welcomed the idea of the conference and promised to try to get a firm answer as quickly as possible.

ENP: WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

¶9. (C) In a wide-ranging discussion of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), van Rij explained European objectives as "increasing stability in unstable areas" on the frontiers of Europe. The recent "no" vote on the EU Constitutional Treaty in the Netherlands, he noted, was due in part to Dutch/European fears about an endlessly expanding Europe. For that reason, the EU must use incentives other than membership to encourage positive change in neighboring areas. These ranged from the "association agreements" negotiated with Middle Eastern states under the Barcelona Process to the sort of quasi-membership enjoyed by Norway and Switzerland.

¶10. (C) With regard to Ukraine, Belarus, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, van Rij stressed that relations with Russia had to be part of the European calculus. The EU has put a lot of effort into convincing Russia that it shares the European interest in developing stable, prosperous neighbors, he said, but with only limited success to date. Bryza acknowledged that the Russian role remained problematic, but noted recent positive signs on "frozen conflicts" in Georgia and Moldova. Van Rij cited as particularly successful the recent Brussels visit of Georgian Prime Minister Noghaidei to discuss Georgia's South Ossetia action plan. Bryza agreed, stressing the need for Europe and the U.S. to encourage Georgia to remain on its current, constructive path toward a peaceful settlement in South Ossetia. On Uzbekistan, Bryza said that while the U.S. was not yet prepared to go as far as the EU in imposing sanctions, the U.S. was indeed considering its own mix of sanctions, and the Uzbeks should be under no illusions about the depth of U.S. concerns.

¶11. (C) Van Rij asked about U.S. views of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), noting that the EU had looked into obtaining observer status and received an ambivalent reply. Bryza said that the U.S. had also explored this possibility, but had the distinct impression that it was not

welcome. He added that the U.S. stood ready to work with the SCO to counter security threats in the region, but would continue to work bilaterally with individual states as well. Van Rij noted that he had had the opportunity recently to visit SCO headquarters in Beijing and was struck by the sophistication of its operations; while it was certainly "no NATO," van Rij argued that it could not be dismissed either.

¶12. (U) DAS Bryza has cleared this cable.

BLAKEMAN